**Good News Newsletter**

**First Presbyterian Church of Decatur**

**June 2020**

**Katie's Korner**

 As I write this letter to you my heart is heavy with many things. As our quarantine drags on, and regulations are lifted, it continues to be difficult to navigate what is best for my own health and safety and the health and safety of those around me. Our nation is responding to the death of George Floyd, an African-American man killed by a police officer, with protests, riots and looting. Even in the midst of a pandemic we see that racism is alive and well in individuals and our institutions. People are hurting and we are no longer able to turn a blind eye to their pain. In these trying times it is difficult to feel as though there will ever be a solution.

 Turning to Scripture can help put our minds and souls at ease. I’ve found myself drawn to the book of Lamentations where Jerusalem has been destroyed and the people of God are crying out and trying to understand what has happened and why. We too are able to cry out to in our sorrow and broken heartedness at what has become of our world. Lamentations offers little hope or comfort in its short 5 chapters, it’s mostly just pain, anger and pleas for mercy. All of those emotions are offered up to God, because that is all we can do with them. We hand all of this over to God because, “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, God’s mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is God’s faithfulness” (Lam. 3:22-23). Crying out to God our laments opens us up to new mercies and understandings each day. For in our lament, we are really asking for God to help us understand what is happening and why. We may never know the answers to these questions, but we will be able to see the situations in a new light. We trust that God is faithful and hears us when we pray, and that God’s love for us will help guide us through whatever comes our way. May it be so.

 **Yours in Christ,**

**Rev. Katie**

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 **June Birthdays and Anniversaries**

13th Glen Pollock 25th Chuck & Pat Anniversary

15th Jan Roeder 26th Blaine Rex

16th Leonda Shroyer 27th Doug Sikkema

18th Tom Kohl

**Deacon of the Month for June is Lori Jeru – 423-8341**

**Monthly Activities at First Presbyterian of Decatur**

**EVERY SUNDAY 10 A.M. WORSHIP SERVICE VIA YOUTUBEM, FACEBOOK OR OUR WEBSITE www.fpcdecaturmi.org**

**SESSION MET VIA ZOOM 7 p.m. MONDAY JUNE 1ST**

**Pentecost was May 31st.** Pentecost celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit 50 days after Easter. Pentecost is the birthday of the Christian church. At Union Church, it’s become our custom to wear red to church to reflect the color of the tongues of fire that symbolize the Holy Spirit. Before Jesus was crucified, he told his disciples that the Holy Spirit would come after him:

*“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever — the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”* John 14:16–18

And 40 days after Jesus was resurrected (10 days after he ascended into heaven), that promise was fulfilled when Peter and the early Church were in Jerusalem for Pentecost:  *“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.”* Acts 2:1–4

This year because of circumstances we celebrated Pentecost a different way. The sermon was on Facebook, and our church website at 10. (you can still see it) and then at 12 p.m. approximately 10 cars drove around the streets of Decatur to wave hello to fellow church members. Afterwards we gathered (social distancing & masks) to just have a few words to each other. We miss our potlucks, our 'passing the peace', and hope to be back into the swing of things in a few months.

**A note from Linda: She misses us.**

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**Sunday School**

**Thank You to all who helped make this an interesting year and a learning experience for our children.**

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**4th of July Chicken Dinner**

**Our church members are very generous in helping with the 4th of July dinner hosted by Decatur Human Services. This year, sadly, there will be no parade or dinner.**



***Frank Zajac***

How lucky are we to have Frank Zajac fill in as organist in the winter when Linda takes her leave for the south. Frank grew up in Bay City, MI. He was two Bachelor of Music Degrees from Michigan State, a Graduate Degree from Oakland University in Rochester, MI. He also studied in London, England at the Royal School of Church Music where he has a degree in choir training and conducting. For five years he was the organist and director of music at the Cathedral of St. Andrew in Little Rock, leaving that position in 1988 to be organist and director of liturgy and music at St. Augustine Cathedral in Kalamazoo. MI. Frank is very involved with the Borzoi Club of America and has three Borzoi. Frank writes: Yes, I three adult Borzoi. that I raised from puppies. I had babies in the house for 2 years. Ella will be 7 years old on May 24. Wizard is 6.5 years old and Basie is 5. I got my first Borzoi in 1979 and his name was Rafe. You may have seen a picture of him I posted several days ago. Dakers was the second arriving in 1992. After he passed I was gifted a Golden Retriever puppy by a Cathedral Choir member and I named him Calvin. As he grew older I was greatly missed having Borzoi and so I got Ella in August, 2013. When Calvin passed in mid November it was only a few weeks before I began my search for a second Borzoi realizing she needed a companion. Wizard is from Starswift Borzoi Kennel in Belleville and arrived in early February, 2014. By September, I realized what a beautiful dog he was and asked his breeder to teach me how to show him. We went to the Borzoi Club of America National Specialty in 2015 where he took 4th place in 15-18 month puppy class. Showing only in Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana, He is an AKC Champion and has 8 points towards his AKC Grand Championship. Basie was not a planned acquisition. I took Wizard to a Lure Coursing event in early June of 2015 in Rives Junction. Anne Midgarden of Teine Borzoi in Wapakoneta OH was there as a judge and she brought along to puppies she hoped to find homes for. Anne owned Wizard's mother, Madeline, a beautiful tricolor Borzoi. I fell in love with one of the puppies and brought him home that day and now I had three. Basie also is an AKC Champion and has 17 points towards his Grand Championship. I am an owner handler, meaning I show my own dogs. I am also their groomer. Ella is spayed and does not qualify to be shown in the conformation ring. They are a lot of work, but worth it and wonderful companions. They each have their own personality and I would have more if I had more property.

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**Presbyterian Women**

We were scheduled to meet this coming Tuesday, but with the continuing concerns about the virus. after talking to a few members, we think that we will meet in September this year and have our potluck that we always look forward to. So, put September 8th on your calendars.

Presbyterian Woman elect to give some of their money to Wings of God Transition Home for Women in Paw Paw. Karina Lamorandier, Executive Director of the home has been scheduled twice to speak to our group. In March we had a snowstorm so she was cancelled. In April the virus kept us at home. This is a report from WOG. As of June 1, there are five women residing there. Normally the house accommodates eight, but they are keeping one room open for a healing room because of the virus. There are more Pearls on their waiting list. Thankfully there are several employers in the area that are willing to hire people with a background, and give them a chance to work during their stay at the house. During this difficult time of the corona-virus they are very thankful for our support. Their monthly needs are met. They are asking us to continue to pray for them.



Wednesday, May 27, 2020, Olivia Ancil and her boyfriend, Alex Arent, were involved in a horrific accident. They were taking a walk near Holland Hospital when they were struck a by a car. Olivia is a cousin of Joel Shroyer. Olivia and Alex have had numerous surgeries, and she is still struggling with all the pain, and frustration that comes along with something so catastrophic. On June 2 she was transferred to Mary Free Bed. She, and her family, have a strong faith in God, and ask for your prayers.



**Please: If you have any news that you would like to have in next month's newsletter send it on to** **roederpotluck@comcast.net**

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MLive just posted a really good list of ranked 9-1 high to low risks and three common sense items to add.  Our risks depend on the duration of exposure, the likely level of compliance, and any personal health factors (weight, diabetes, etc.)  Church is high risk!  Especially with singing!  But I would insert the following sentence (in red):

“Where does COVID-19 leave us today?  What are the facts?

What are the risks?  1) How long you are exposed, 2) what the level of compliance is, and 3) what your personal health conditions are.

*Is anyone immune from getting the virus?*  **No,** unless you have already recovered. But like the flu you can get it again next year.

*Are enough people recovered from COVID-19 to make me safe?*  **Plain and simple, NO!**    The majority of people you meet daily have not had it **and can carry** it to you.  Furthermore, **most people who have had it will never know it** (unless tested)**.  They are asymptomatic carriers.  And you too may be a carrier** without knowing it!

*Do I really need a mask?*  **YES!**  You are most at risk from people who come closer than 6’.

When?  **Inside buildings**, especially, when you cannot guarantee others will keep their distance.

*What about outside?*  **Not really, but it depends.  If you are walking in a crowd, YES.** If you are in your yard talking to your neighbor**, NO** as long as you keep you distance**.**   Stop and think about a smoker. Where does the exhaled smoke go?  Like smoke, exhaled virus won’t go 6’.  But, if singing, shouting, sneezing or coughing, sure it is likely to travel over 6’.  Remember, these droplets are bigger than smoke, so they fall out based on size and speed of exhaling.  There are more viruses in a big droplet than in a small one however all it takes is one virus particle to make you sick or die.

*Who is at risk?* You are probably most at risk with your own family members; aunts and uncles, grandkids and close friends.  You cannot be sure who they have seen, up close and personal, yesterday and even less, last week.  Short of community wide testing, your family and friends have no way to know if they, or if others they contacted in the last two weeks have the virus.  This is why tracking is so important (asking those who come down with the virus, who all they came into contact with earlier).

*What does all of this boil down to?*The **masks and six feet** do two things:  **They protect you and they protect the rest of us as well**.  We will choose to keep each other safe.  We choose to understand how the disease kills and choose to protect each other.  We are looking at parking lot church and possible communion options. However, return to “Hockey” (full contact) Church at FPC Decatur will likely wait for a vaccine.

Your Session will continue to share with you the best medical knowledge available as we make safe changes so that we can share more closeness; which we know is vital to love and companionship with each other and God.

If faith and hope. David & Chuck



Highlights of the May4, 2020 Session Meeting

The stated Session meeting of the First Presbyterian Church of Decatur was held at 7 PM via Zoom due to the Corona Virus Quarantine. All present.

**Report of Treasurer – Fred Reeder**

March & April

 Beginning Balance $48,303.86

revenues $11,335.88

 Expenses $18,952.60

 Ending Balance $40,687.14

***Sailboat Church* Discussion -**Church is more than a social group. We talked about how we can “meet” and be united without gathering.

**Old Business**

* Small Business Loan Update – We have been approved
* A payroll account will be opened at Honor Credit Union.

**New Business**

* + Covid-19 re-opening brainstorm discussion.

**Endowment Committee**

* Since the inception, the earnings on the account are $11,691. The balance has fallen from roughly $86,000 to $72,000 due to the market fluctuations.

**Report of Clerk**

* Presbytery changed their by-laws to be able to meet via Zoom. They are also sent daily emails with information

**Pastor’s Report**

* Pastor Katie trying to keep connected to our members via her video chats three times a week.
* Doing a congregational mailing the second week of May.
* She will be attending an on-line Homiletic Festival on May 17 & 18

**Board of Deacons**

* The Deacons continue to call and send cards to members and friends.

**Stewardship, Audit, Personnel Committee**

* Bank balance $27,639.72 Online giving is beginning to take off.

**Building and Grounds Committee**

* Tuck pointing is complete, New gutters not on yet. At some point a new lintel over the side door will be needed. Elevator windows need to be clad with aluminum. The front landscaping needs trimming and sprucing up.

**Memorial and Mission Committee**

* One Great Hour of Sharing Offering $320, 40% of which stays in our community.
* The next special offering is Pentecost, May 31.

**Worship and Music Committee**

* Asking for videos for special music
* Possibility of continuing on-line services once we can meet

**Christian Education and Youth Committee**

* The curriculum needs re-vamping
* Looking for ways for the kids to make money
* Perhaps use Google Classroom to meet during the quarantine time

The next Session Meeting Monday, June 1, at 7:00 p.m., in a manner to be determined.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Makay, Clerk of Session